

What should I do when my child is a poor loser?

Encourage your child to share materials, take turns, follow the game rules and talk nice while playing games. This behavior should be consistent and followed by everyone in the home.

Before beginning a game, make sure your child knows the rules, is familiar with the game, and will be compatible with the other individuals who will be playing. Supervise your child closely when they are engaged in competitive activities in order to provide positive ways in which to behave when they lose a game.

Reward your child for following the rules. Possible rewards include verbal praise, a kiss on the cheek, or staying up late. Be a good role model for your child by being a good loser.

Reduce the emphasis on competition and “winning.” Emphasize working together, having fun, and making new friends. Before a competitive activity, remind your child of the importance of personal improvement, doing their best and contributing to team success.

When your child is a poor loser, explain exactly what they did wrong and what they should be doing and why. Limit your child’s participation in activities that cause them to act like a poor loser.

Immediately remove your child from an activity when they behave poorly. Make certain that your child sees the relationship between their behavior and the consequences of being removed from the game, being made fun of by peers, or being avoided by friends.